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A Disclosure: It Did Not Happen Like This

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desire: a case study

Shelby Perlis

I'm thinking about wanting
Wanting is something I have to think about.

I'm thinking about want
as a privilege
we punish some for encroaching.
I'm thinking about women in Jane Austen books
wanting fortunes, wanting futures,
wanting men with sisters, wanting men.
I'm thinking about how these are the characters
who often finish alone and overlooked.

I'm thinking about want
as a right
some exercise with impunity.
I'm thinking about men who spy
a quarter of a woman's face through
her car window and decide
yes, I am owed this, yes, this will do.
I am thinking as I drive
how to not get followed,
how to get out alive.

I'm thinking anyway about what
it would mean
to stop wanting.
(What would be left?)
How dare you think
of leaving me satisfied,
how dare I hope
for a box that's checked.

I'm thinking about want
as a privacy
and what that means to share.
(How am I expected to know what
our moms are too embarrassed to discuss?)
I want to read peer-reviewed journals
on want, I want
never to hear the word again.

Except from you—always from you.
Say nothing else and I promise I won't
ever give you
anything you
want.

A Disclosure— It Did Not Happen Like This

Jo Gibson

Lightly
a trail of touch
drags across skin within
an enclosed trail, filled by mustard
perfume.

A bird,
sings of springtime.
While gentle waves roll
over the ever yielding sands
that scrape

raw the
rough edge of fate.
Long forgotten by those
who live in the darkest of shade.
Hidden

from sight
of the man who
looks for the buried crab,
and only finding the remains
of our

love. Where
you have shivered
and cried out in pleasure,
forgetting who you were and what
I did.